



**TOWN OF NAHANT
Advisory and Finance Committee**

Members

Robert Vanderslice, Co-Chair
John Fulghum, Co-Chair
Barbara Beatty
DeWitt Brown
Jeff Lewis
Dana Sheehan
Julie Tarmy
Judy Zahora

Tuesday March 9, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Beatty, Brown, Lewis, Fulghum, Tarmy, Vanderslice, Zahora, Sheehan

Members Absent: none

Others Present: A. Barletta, A. Antrim, E. Potts, K. Marden, M. Capano, S. Hawkes, D. Monteith, A. Nieto, M. Patek

Meeting called to order at 7:04 p.m.

Fulghum spoke with Jen McCarthy who stated she is content with the Recreation budget

Library Budget

- Placeholder for full-time Children's Library for over a decade
- Unfilled for six year and unfunded
- Library assistant pay has increased, but also doing work of Children's Librarian
- Trustees have been pushing for a fully qualified child librarian
- Hoping for hourly adult reference position at \$15.60/hour
- S. Hawkes states that M. Cullinan would like to fully fund – suggesting work with School
- School committee is discussing possible collaboration
- \$4,957 in school library budget – would still be short \$5k for Child Librarian
- Surrounding communities pay: Mblld/\$26.48/hr; Swmp/\$24.21; Lynn/\$21.17; Lynf/\$21.77. Nahant is asking for \$20.51/hr for Child Librarian
- Even if fully funded, library budget would still be only 1.9% of town budget
- Page min wage going up from \$1275 to \$13.50, do not want to eliminate this position
- Longevity bonuses were restored
- Purchase of services – level funded
- Operating/Maintenance budget – level funded
- Materials budget is State requirement of 19.5% on materials budget – currently falls short by \$2K
- State aid probably \$4K
- Board of Trustees recommends this budget

Fulghum: in context of COVID – what services are being offered? How do you project it to be different going forward this year?



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Hawkes:

- Open by appointment
- 5 people at a time, clean between groups
- Circulation is down
- Visits are down
- Had to cut back on programs – indoors and outdoors
- No time to promote virtual programs
- Working on grants – assistant is doing the purchasing
- S.H. is shelving books on day library is closed

A children's librarian would liaison with school and facilitate on-line programs; story time to younger children;

- Summer reading program will be all on-line again; enrollment was down last summer.

Zahora: How many children used the library in the past couple of years?

Hawkes: Primarily adult library in terms of # of people coming in. Of approx. 8,000 walk-ins, 10% are children. There are about 135 children at the Johnson School, but this is not the total population of town children. Untouched segment would be home-schooled students. A qualified Children's Librarian would be marketing to these. Also, we want to be sure the 6th grade students are heading to Swampscott with library skills. Position would be 37.5 hours at \$40k plus benefits. Benefits are not included in department budgets. They fall under the Town budget as a line item. Part-time would not be first choice. Master's degree position.

Lewis: Is there data on FTE's per capital for Libraries?

Hawkes: Mass Board of Library Commissions would have that info.

Lewis: Creative ways for funding Library?

Hawkes: Currently waiving overdue fines, but suggesting patrons donate to the building fund. Friends of Library helps with funding – 5% for programs, books for kids in reading program and building fund. We currently have an application in to CPC and Mass Historical Commission.

Beatty: Specific grants obtained?

Hawkes:

- \$100K toward library programming plus \$400 CPC for terrace
- Library inventory grant from CPC
- Nature in Nahant work
- Dementia friendly program



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- STEAM Everywhere for non-fiction children's books
- All of Us Tech – Stop Lyme Disease program
- 200th Anniversary of Library event
- Mass Memories Program
- Summer Reading

Total grants received for these: \$548,619

Bottom line: Not asking to create a position, but to fully fund the existing position to attract a qualified candidate.

Moving on:

Town Assessor not able to be here tonight. Hope to have them at next meeting.

Sailing Program

Mark Patek:

- \$5,200 town contribution to program – 'we can live with it'
- 6-week program last year
- All employees are part-time
- Unpaid CITs
- Last summer cut back on program due to COVID. Could not have more than one person in a small boat.
- Director of program – Olivia Fulghum – did a fantastic job, even with shortened hours
- Minimum wage is increasing from \$12.75 to \$13.50
- Last year total income was \$19,471, including the \$5K from Town. Wages were \$18,145. With additional costs for gas and misc. supplies, still ended with \$750!
- Friends of Nahant Sailing contributed \$1,200 for COVID supplies
- Instructors took care of their own expenses
- Program committee volunteered time and money as well for necessities.
- Heidi Fiore put out a notice for this year's program, and about 45 people – adults and children – have responded
- Hope to return to full 7-week program

Sheehan: Would be supportive of this.

Beatty: Sailing program essential to who we are as a sea town.

Barletta: The intention was not to squeeze the sailing program. Would be in favor of looking at numbers again with BOS.



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Council on Aging/Veteran's Affairs/Recreation

Barletta:

- COA is one dept that has been funded almost primarily by COVID
- Did not use a lot of their grant and appropriation \$ last year
- In good shape going into this year
- Grants and donations will roll over

- Veteran's Affairs – level funded except for Veteran's Agent salary. Did not ask for additional money this year.

- Recreation updated from \$3,090 to \$3,152 to cover minimum wage increase
- Some employees work in two different fiscal years, as well as two different calendar years
- Somewhat funded through revolving fund
- Not sure if park league will be held this year

Veteran Housing

- Hall company does all of the accounting. Town receives a monthly report.
- Income received is offset by related expenses
- Hall company collects the rent; takes care of structural issues and improvements; leases vacant homes; handles boiler problems.
- Town carries insurance for underground oil tank issues.

General

- Unappropriated funds that were being used to build up free cash – we expected this to take a hit due to COVID
- Part of goal has been to not use all of our free cash to balance budget
- Took extra funds and put into debt
- Min debt due - \$661,274
- Budgeted \$816,301 leaving addition a \$175,623 to put toward principal of debt with highest interest rate. This is a healthy expense of free cash. Will still have flexibility at end of fiscal year.
- J. Lewis has been working with A. Nieto and T. Barletta to facilitate decreasing debt



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General discussion on ways of looking at financial planning and revenue per capita. Average income in town has gone down. We are an aging community. State aid is expected to either be level or go down. Estimating 2 1/2% increase on R.E. Tax and Personal property taxes.

Updated Warrant

- Moved CG Housing up in order and MWRA down.
- Language for marijuana local tax will be discussed at meeting this coming Thursday, 3/11.
- Lowlands storm water article from BOS – language may be more general but with same intent. BOS will work with petitioner. \$ amount based on known costs of past work. Barletta may set up a ZOOM with residents in this affected area.
- BOS may add Plastic bag proposal from Max McDonough. BOS in favor. He gave a great presentation.
- Planning board submitted CPC application for ecological study of lowland area.

CPC on agenda for next week? Note sent to L. Spencer.
Assessor hopes to be ready for next week.

Discussion on site for FinCom to store documents to be viewed only or edited individually, not deliberated on. Also discussed procedure for writing responses to articles, based on FinCom recommendation.

Community Input: none

Motion to adjourn by Brown, seconded by Zahora. Unanimous ayes.
Meeting adjourned at 9:23 p.m.